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Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 65/216, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to seek further the views of Member States and relevant agencies of the United Nations system on the issue of globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights and to submit a substantive report on the subject to the Assembly at its sixty-sixth session. The report summarizes views expressed in replies received from the Governments of Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Cuba, Kuwait, Panama, Peru, Senegal and Serbia, as well as from the World Trade Organization, and provides recommendations on ways to address the impact of globalization on the full enjoyment of all human rights.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 65/216, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights (A/65/171), and requested the Secretary-General to seek further the views of Member States and relevant agencies of the United Nations system and to submit to the Assembly at its sixty-sixth session a substantive report on this subject based on these views, including recommendations on ways to address the impact of globalization on the full enjoyment of all human rights.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 28 April 2011, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights sent a request for views on this issue. As at 15 July 2011, the Office had received responses from the Governments of Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Cuba, Kuwait and Serbia and from the World Trade Organization. The present report also contains summaries of responses that were received from the Governments of Panama, Peru and Senegal in 2010 after the submission deadline and therefore could not be included in the aforementioned report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Azerbaijan

3. The Government of Azerbaijan provided a list of State programmes dealing with various issues, such as regional development; energy, including from alternative and renewable sources; employment, including migration, demography and population development; social protection and its extension to the elderly; health; education; the environment; refugees and internally displaced persons, including improving their living standards and increasing their employment opportunities; human trafficking and violence; youth policy; and good governance, increasing transparency and fighting corruption.

Bulgaria

4. The Government of Bulgaria stated that it was of the view that only a stable economic and financial framework could encourage the democratic development of societies and full respect for all human rights. The existence of an open, predictable, rule-based, equitable and non-discriminatory multilateral trade and financial system would foster the democratic and transparent participation of the developing countries. Bulgaria expressed its commitment to the achievement of an equitably and democratically functioning transparent international economic system, promoting the ideas of democracy and freedom. Bulgaria stated that it worked actively for the attainment of that goal by supporting basic European principles and values, such as liberty, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. It participated in the work of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations system, both of which had the objective of establishing an equitable, open and democratic reallocation system, which, in turn, would lead to the achievement of democratic governance and ensure human and civil rights worldwide.

Cuba

5. The Government of Cuba stated that it attached great importance to the central role that the United Nations system should play as a universal and more representative forum in redefining the bases of the current process of globalization such that its potential benefits could reach all the peoples of the world. It referred to growing links of interdependence, explained by the fact that events taking place in one part of the world had consequences for the lives of millions of people in other parts. In this context, Cuba stated that under the principle of shared responsibility and within the multilateral framework, all peoples should enjoy the intrinsic right to participate in the governance and administration of those processes that had a global impact.

6. Cuba referred to the diminishing role and economic and financial capacity of the State to realize the right to development and to maintain, provide or guarantee basic public services, such as education, health care and social security in the process of neo-liberal globalization. This had deepened inequality and, in most cases, deprived millions of people, in some cases the majority of the population, of their economic, social and cultural rights. Neo-liberal globalization had contributed to the expansion of vice and crime, such as drug-trafficking, prostitution and pornography, including human trafficking, paedophilia, racism and racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance. The right of every person to a social and international order in which rights and freedoms could be fully realized, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, reiterated in the Declaration on the Right to Development and reaffirmed by consensus at the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993, was far from being achieved.

7. Cuba stated that the mechanisms of free market economy and the "equality" between unequals promoted by neo-liberal globalization through regional free trade agreements or trade liberalization within the framework of WTO tended to favour developed countries and perpetuate and deepen the inequalities between the latter and the countries of the South. With regard to subsidies, Cuba stated that, despite the fact that developed countries and the trade and financial institutions they controlled advocated market deregulation and the elimination of subsidies in developing countries, developed countries continued to provide agricultural subsidies and kept their markets closed to the main exports of the majority of developing countries.

8. With respect to the political aspect of globalization, Cuba referred to the centres of power and their tendency to globalize their formal representative democracy as a unique system; and criticized the biased interpretation of civil and political rights according to which the latter was given priority and was divorced from the realization of economic, social and cultural rights. Cuba highlighted the consensus of the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action that affirmed the importance of taking into consideration national and regional particularities, as well as differences in historical, cultural and religious heritage. It stated that policies restricting the movement of persons between the South and the North were far from having been liberalized. Instead, restrictions on migration to the industrialized world were increasing, even threatening the use of military force to stop the growing wave of migration. Cuba stressed that, furthermore, the transfer of technology had not been liberalized. On the contrary, the intellectual property regimes, which were aimed at protecting the monopoly and dominance of developed countries and their

enterprises and perpetuated the dependency of developing countries, were being strengthened.

9. Cuba stated that the continued application of neo-liberal policies would render the realization of all human rights for all an unattainable and illusory objective. It highlighted the grave consequences of those policies for peace; national, regional and international stability; the preservation and rational use of resources; and, consequently, the survival of humanity. Cuba underlined the need to adopt policies and measures at the global level which corresponded to the needs of developing countries and were formulated and implemented with their participation. The international cooperation and order conducive to the realization of all human rights must be strengthened urgently by the entire international community, in particular by those who had benefited the most from such cooperation to date. In that respect, international solidarity was indispensable.

10. The main obstacle to finding solutions to problems caused by the current philosophy of globalization was the absence of real political will on the part of industrialized countries to fulfil the commitments previously undertaken and to change the prevailing rules of the game. The approaches and initiatives designed to date by developed countries and international institutions to address the challenges exacerbated by the current neo-liberal globalization, such as underdevelopment, poverty and HIV/AIDS, were only limited palliative remedies and were insufficient to resolve the serious problems and enormous inequalities existing in the contemporary world.

11. Cuba stated that if real political will existed, much could be done, with relatively few resources out of the hundreds of billions of dollars spent annually on armaments, wars of conquest and commercial publicity, to realize the right to life and to development of millions of people.

12. Cuba emphasized the importance of placing development at the centre of the international economic agenda with a view to eradicating poverty and eliminating the disparities between the rich and the poor. It was necessary to establish an equitable, transparent and democratic international system in which far-reaching, comprehensive, innovative and simultaneous measures were implemented in various areas, starting with the cancellation of external debt. Cuba stated that official development assistance should increase, should be unconditional and should not be subject to the economic and political interests of donors. It suggested a return to preferential trade agreements and ways of compensating for the deep and growing inequalities, and recommended that the international financial institutions be replaced and that the United Nations be reformed and democratized in order to make it truly effective. It proposed the creation of a tax for development.

13. Cuba expressed its agreement with the positions of growing social sectors worldwide that questioned and criticized the current neo-liberal order. Humanity would be able to survive only with a more humane and equitable order in which social justice prevailed. Lastly, Cuba reiterated that the unfair, egotistical and unequal international order could solve neither the severe problems that humanity confronted today nor the major challenges of the future.

Kuwait

14. Kuwait provided information on the national development plan, which was aimed at raising the standard of living of its citizens and supporting human and community development. In order to address the impact of the global financial crisis, Kuwait had engaged in efforts to revive its economy through the strengthening of public expenditure, which was the main driver of economic activity, with a focus on public investment to accelerate the implementation of major development projects. It had also encouraged investment by giving the private sector a leading role in the financing, implementation and management of some of the projects.

15. Kuwait stated that it had enacted or amended laws and legislation to reinforce stability and transparency, thereby contributing to an enabling environment for domestic and foreign investment. Those developments were explained in detail in the response of Kuwait. In addition, Kuwait was engaged in preparing a national report on the human rights situation in the country within the framework of the universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council, and had taken steps in that regard.

Panama

16. The Government of Panama stated that it had taken a series of actions in order to fulfil the commitments undertaken with respect to General Assembly resolution 64/160 on globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights. In this context, in 2006 the Government had created the Social Protection System Secretariat, involving various governmental institutions that provided services to townships mired in extreme poverty identified through poverty mapping and social vulnerability analyses, to integrate families living in extreme poverty into the dynamics of national development. As of January 2010, the programme had taken care of 63,072 households. The Government had adopted various policies and programmes, as explained in detail in the reply of Panama, on the provision of support to elderly persons who did not have pensions and to victims of sexual violence; on combating hunger and malnutrition; on the protection of the right to family life; on the prevention and eradication of child labour; and on child adoptions. Panama provided information regarding policy recommendations made by the Advisory Council on Infancy in the areas of health, education and a working environment with universal access to breastfeeding rooms and childcare centres.

17. Panama stated that the process of globalization had shortened the distance between countries, peoples, cultures and generations. In this rapprochement, every person claimed his or her rights, and States should guarantee the right to development in a culturally appropriate manner. In order to respond to the effects of globalization, the Ministry of Social Development focused on priority groups. In this respect, a series of activities to ensure the participation, awareness, protection and security of elderly persons had been implemented. Likewise, Panama had been promoting the rights of indigenous peoples, as well as the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, at the national level. Furthermore, a process had been initiated to establish an inter-institutional and multisectoral network to promote respect for the human rights of young people. Panama supported the strengthening of spaces for youth participation in order to improve their impact on public policies.

Peru

18. The Government of Peru stated that its contribution was informed by the views expressed by the National Human Rights Council. Peru hoped that globalization would be seen as a process in the larger context of respect for human rights and the dignity of persons; would serve to integrate countries with which it maintained relations; and would provide opportunities for progress to those countries and their citizens, regardless of gender, race or social class. Peru had recognized the universal nature of human rights by ratifying the relevant international instruments, which had been integrated into its internal legislation, contributing to achieving the full enjoyment of human rights.

19. Peru stated that globalization was a process of structural transformation that affected respect for the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of citizens in every country, and created difficulties that must be addressed. Globalization must benefit every citizen and elevate the income levels of countries in accordance with universally recognized values. In this respect, Peru had implemented policies oriented towards linking economic growth with respect for human rights in areas such as agriculture, trade, poverty reduction and respect for cultural diversity. Detailed information on those programmes was provided by Peru.

20. With regard to good governance and transparency, Peru recognized that the economic sphere could not be separated from the social and political spheres. In this respect, in order to ensure growth and prosperity, market forces should be based on values that helped to improve the living standards of those with fewer resources.

21. With regard to the social, environmental and cultural consequences of globalization, Peru emphasized the need to put in place mechanisms to promote ecologically sustainable development. In this respect, Peru had enacted an environmental law creating a national system for environmental impact evaluation, which established certain norms for all construction, work, services and other activities, as well as public policies, plans and programmes, that might have significant environmental consequences. Among the requirements of the system was the conduct of environmental impact studies, which were management tools that included a technical evaluation of the proposed activity and its foreseeable direct and indirect impacts on the environment, both physically and socially, in the short and long terms. Such studies served to identity the measures necessary for preventing damage or reducing it to tolerable levels.

Senegal

22. The Government of Senegal stated that under pressure from growing market forces, human rights were being reduced to basic civil and political rights, as economic, social and cultural rights were constantly being eroded. Senegal stated that civil and political rights, which were directly under the sovereignty of States, were largely protected within States, subject to the limits laid down by law. In the case of economic, social and cultural rights, under the current conditions of uncontrolled and dehumanizing globalization, market forces were establishing a new economic order that was seriously jeopardizing the full enjoyment of human rights.

23. Senegal stated that the global expansion of the neo-liberal economic system proceeded by means of liberalization, deregulation, privatization and cuts in public

expenditure as a result of pressures exerted on States by international financial and trade institutions. Such policies had appalling consequences, such as poverty and malnutrition, for the majority of the world's population. The proliferation of diseases, the deterioration of educational systems, mass unemployment, job insecurity, the phenomenal rise of corruption and money-laundering, environmental degradation, the destruction of the social fabric, widespread poverty, insecurity, armed violence and the threat of terrorism were the effects of globalization and were likely to seriously affect the enjoyment of human rights.

24. Senegal stated that, within the current economic system, the power of transnational corporations was becoming more prominent, while the State was excluded from economic decision-making in the name of "competition" and the "free play of market forces". The turnover of the largest such corporations was equivalent to or greater than the gross domestic product (GDP) of many countries, and that of half a dozen of them exceeded the GDP of the 100 poorest countries. The working methods and activities of transnational corporations were determined by the sole objective of profit maximization, for the attainment of which they resorted to all possible means. Senegal stressed that the right of peoples to self-determination and to dispose of their natural resources, as laid down in article 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, was increasingly in question. With the organized looting of wealth in parts of the world, including in Africa, entire populations were deprived of their means of subsistence. The activities of oil giants in the Niger Delta had provoked a revolt by the people of southern Nigeria, who claimed their share of wealth and their right to a healthy environment.

25. Deregulation for the purpose of attracting investment in sectors where traditional social rights were in question opened the way to abuse and led to the violation of articles 7 and 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Thus, the right of all persons to fair working conditions to provide a decent living for themselves and their families was no longer guaranteed. In the view of Senegal, the privatization of essential services — water, energy, education, health and housing — and cuts in public spending had worsened the impoverishment of the populations of underdeveloped countries, where the overwhelming majority still lived below the poverty threshold according to United Nations Development Programme indicators. Access to safe drinking water had become a luxury for the poor and the inhabitants of the deprived zones. The decline in public health services had disadvantaged the poor. While measures to ensure the full exercise of the right of everyone to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health were not made available by States, private health services remained out of reach for the poor and people living in remote areas. Education was no exception to the phenomenon of commercialization. Only rarely did States consider public expenditure on education as investment in human capital formation and make it a priority. According to Senegal, it was quite common to see the State disengage and the quality of education deteriorate. Access to quality education was increasingly becoming a privilege, owing to its high cost.

26. Senegal recommended some measures to reconcile globalization and human rights. It stressed the importance of the empowerment of citizens in questioning public authorities regarding the solution of public policy problems, especially in relation to economic and social rights. The participation of citizens should allow both governors and governed to lead the international trade and financial institutions

to respect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international covenants on civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights so as to give globalization a human face. Globalization needed a legal framework of which human rights were an essential element. Given that the rule of the market could no longer be beyond the reach of international legal instruments, the human person should be the end, not just the means, of globalization.

27. In the view of Senegal, citizen participation would also lead transnational corporations to respect the relevant international human rights instruments by assuming responsibility for the violation of rights contained therein. Those enterprises which did not enjoy any sovereignty, and thus no jurisdictional immunity, should address the serious infringement of human rights for which they were responsible throughout the world.

28. The participation of people was also expected to induce States to honour their commitments while negotiating with international financial institutions. Senegal believed that decisions regarding market liberalization should no longer be imposed on people through State intervention. Such decisions, including laws or international treaties prior to signature and ratification, must be controlled by democratically elected or legally competent bodies and, where necessary, must be approved or rejected by referendum. The same was true for privatization, deregulation and cuts in public spending.

29. Senegal stated that public participation would help to shield the rights and freedoms of individuals and peoples from subordination to or dependence on the law of the market. As the market was not a democratic and transparent authority and its true decision makers did not have the legitimacy to make decisions on behalf of nations throughout the world, the mission and competence of the Economic and Social Council should be broadened to make it a global observatory and a centre of impetus and regulation for the global market.

Serbia

30. Serbia stated that it had adopted a national strategy for sustainable development for the period 2009-2017 and an action plan for the implementation of the strategy. However, a large number of measures envisaged in the strategy and the action plan could not be implemented in 2010 owing to the global economic crisis. Consequently, a period of substantial decrease in absolute poverty had been followed by an increase in the number of people living below the absolute poverty line, accompanied by a deterioration in all other poverty indicators. The fall in economic activity and the consequent rise in unemployment had contributed to that deterioration. The employment rate had fallen from 50 per cent in 2009 to 37.9 per cent in 2010, which was the second consecutive year to witness a decrease in employment. Serbia also emphasized the big differences in the generation and distribution of income between regions in the country.

31. Serbia stated that the period 2009-2010 was marked by a gradual shift from the concept of decreasing poverty to that of social inclusion aimed at eliminating the causes of poverty, providing an adequate level of living standards and creating conditions for the active participation of the population in the economic, social and cultural spheres. Serbia noted that the priorities in guaranteeing the exercise of human rights included the carrying out of reforms, the elimination of the structural

deficit, in particular where the coordination of tasks falling within the competence of several State bodies was concerned. There needed to be a clear definition of competences for the fulfilment of obligations arising from international human rights instruments and the implementation of relevant norms. Serbia stressed the need to develop a system of functional reporting on and supervision over the implementation of measures with respect to human rights, including minority rights. The priority in guaranteeing the exercise of minority rights lay primarily in strengthening further the social and economic situation of persons belonging to certain national minorities and reducing the ethnic distance of the majority of the Serbian population from members of national minorities.

III. Replies received from United Nations organizations

World Trade Organization

32. The World Trade Organization stressed transparency, coherence and equity as the driving forces behind the multilateral trading system, much as was the case with human rights mechanisms. Opening up international trade could lead to growth and development, helping to raise standards of living and thereby contribute to the actual implementation of proclaimed rights such as those relating to employment, access to education and health care. This presupposed that existing rules were global and just and reflected the expectations of all that adhered to them. The current set of rules and agreements that collectively formed the multilateral trading system did not fully meet that condition, nor did it entirely reflect the changing composition and demands that WTO faced in today's globalized world. The need for updating and change was the most important reason for the WTO membership to launch the Doha Round of negotiations in 2001. The strongest drivers of that conviction were the changing economic, social and environmental circumstances and a shared need to address the development and poverty challenges dominating the international agenda.

33. That change in direction was reflected in the daily operations of the organization, as well as in the negotiating positions of its members. The States members of WTO sought to place the interests of the developing and least developed countries at the heart of WTO and reform the multilateral trading system and functions so that the majority of its membership could secure a larger share in the growth of world trade that would meet their economic and development needs. Providing guaranteed market access, reforming the rules in favour of developing countries and building demand-driven and sustainable technical assistance and capacity-building programmes were examples of the central role that development played in the operations of WTO. It was crucial that members focus on the way forward in implementing the Doha Development Agenda and on the continued functioning and further improvement of the multilateral trading system in the long term.

34. WTO stressed the contribution of the multilateral trading system to economic growth, development and employment. Trade was recognized as one of the driving forces of globalization and the role that trade played in fostering economic development had been clearly established. It had generated gains for many developing countries, and the reverse effects of collapsing trade volumes on growth,

employment and stability had been seen during the 2008 economic and financial crisis. Despite the signs of stabilization in the financial markets, the aftermath of the crisis persisted, in particular for many developing countries. However, recent statistics showed how trade had helped the world to escape recession. After the record-breaking 14.5 per cent surge in the volume of exports in 2010 (12.9 per cent for developed countries and 16.7 per cent for developing countries), world trade growth was expected to return to a more normal rate of expansion of 6.5 per cent in 2011 (4.5 per cent for developed countries and 9.5 per cent for developing countries). WTO had projected a 3.1 per cent growth rate of world GDP for 2011, against 3.6 per cent in 2010. Although the risk of deterioration could not be excluded, owing to the situation in Japan and the Middle East, those figures remained very encouraging and showed that the global economy had recovered to its pre-crisis level.

35. During the crisis, there was a fear that an increase in protectionist measures would run the risk of creating a downward spiral. This trend was visible in both developed and developing countries. The developing countries were expected to suffer more as a result of any surge in protectionism, because their exports were often particularly sensitive to the various protectionist actions and because they generally lacked the safety nets necessary to help those affected. WTO reports on measures taken by its members — as part of its regular Trade Policy Review Mechanism — had indicated further slippage towards more trade-restrictive actions, but resort to high-intensity protectionism had been contained. However, WTO members should remain vigilant and continue to work towards opening up markets rather than closing them, as high unemployment in developed countries and severe belt-tightening in Europe would clearly maintain protectionist pressures. Therefore, WTO members were strongly urged to advance the conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda. An ambitious, balanced and development-oriented outcome would ensure that the global trading system remained open to support the development efforts of all countries. Concluding the Doha Development Agenda would be the surest way of safeguarding individual trade interests and the multilateral trading system against an outbreak of protectionism.

36. WTO stated that it was at the forefront of efforts to fulfil Millennium Development Goal 8 on the global partnership for development and actively promoted the attainment of target E of Millennium Development Goal 8, which aimed to provide access to affordable medicines in developing countries. The Doha Declaration on the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights and Public Health had given poor countries additional flexibility to gain access to affordable medicines. The system of compulsory licensing was now more effective and allowed generic versions of patented medicines to be made under compulsory licence for exports to countries that could not manufacture the medicines themselves.

37. Aid for Trade was a stimulus that many developing and least developed countries needed in order to remain competitive and to use trade as a tool for poverty reduction. The effects of the crisis on the availability of liquidity and the subsequent supply of trade credit were well known. WTO emphasized the importance of trade financing at affordable rates and stated that more was needed in terms of building stable and longer-term productive capacity and infrastructural networks in developing countries. Since 2005, Aid for Trade had grown by 10 per cent a year, bringing total new commitments to more than $41 billion in 2009. Aid

for Trade and the successful conclusion of the Doha Round were the two global tools that the international community should use to combat the negative effects of the crisis. Both were born out of mutual interests and cooperation and provided a further opportunity to reinvigorate multilateral cooperation. Strengthening the multilateral trading rules and locking in countries' trade policy ambitions and aspirations were important multipliers of improved and more efficient global governance.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

38. **The year 2011 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development. The Declaration defines the right to development as an inalienable human right by virtue of which everyone has the right to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development (article 1.1). The Declaration sets out the particular requirements of the right to development, which include putting the human person at the centre of development; ensuring active, free and meaningful participation; securing non-discrimination; fairly distributing the benefits of development; respecting self-determination and sovereignty over natural resources; and informing all processes that advance other civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.**

39. **International cooperation and solidarity between States are indispensable for the sharing of the benefits and burdens of globalization. This concerns all spheres of cooperation, including aid, trade, investment, debt relief, transfer of technology, access to medicines, financing for development and climate change. In this regard, the reform of global economic governance is vital so as to ensure that all countries and peoples can benefit equally from globalization. Such reform must take into consideration the enhanced and effective participation of developing countries, least developed countries, small island developing States, landlocked developing countries and civil society in global decision-making, in order to create more favourable international conditions for equitable, inclusive and sustainable development respectful of all human rights. In a world that bears witness to increasingly frequent natural and man-made disasters, solidarity among peoples and nations is essential to human survival.**

40. **Respect for all civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, the rule of law, the fight against corruption and commitment to good governance practices, including transparent, responsible, accountable, inclusive and participatory government responsive to the needs and aspirations of people, are indispensable to peace and security, economic and political stability and development. These principles should be well respected by States and non-State actors at both the national and the international levels. Current developments throughout the world against authoritarian regimes prove that violations of human rights, the inequitable distribution of national wealth and resources, corruption, exclusion and discrimination will not be tolerated in the long term.**

41. **The world has also witnessed popular dissatisfaction in developed countries, with economic policies that have not put people at their centre and thus failed to equitably increase the economic and social welfare of people and led to the economic and social marginalization of certain sectors of the**

population, including the poor, youth, migrants and women. In the light of these developments, States should look for ways to enhance the active, free and meaningful participation of people and civil society in decision-making mechanisms.

42. **At the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, held in 2010, Member States recognized that human rights were essential in efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals should incorporate the human rights principles of accountability, equality, non-discrimination, participation and transparency.**

43. **The international community should strengthen its efforts to implement an inclusive, equitable and rights-based approach in the lead-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) Conference in 2012 and to focus on addressing the rights of the most vulnerable sectors of society. The human rights dimensions of sustainable development should feature prominently in negotiations.**

44. **States should work towards a meaningful conclusion of the Doha Round of negotiations to ensure an open, rules-based, transparent and fairer multilateral trading system that guarantees respect for all human rights, including the right to development.**

45. **Prior to designing and implementing policies or undertaking any commitments at the local, national, regional and international levels in the area of trade and investment, States should consider and assess the impacts of trade, investment and development policies on human rights.**

46. **The activities of business enterprises may affect human rights. As such, concerted measures are necessary to prevent business-related human rights abuses. States and businesses are encouraged to observe the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, endorsed by the Human Rights Council on 16 June 2011, for implementing the United Nations "protect, respect and remedy" framework developed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises. The Guiding Principles provide — for the first time — a global standard for preventing and addressing the risk of adverse impacts on human rights linked to business activity.**